

## Communication Tips

### For People with Hearing Loss

**Be Prepared:** Get and know how to use hearing aids and assistive technology.

**Don't Bluff:** Appearing to be stupid is a lot worse than appearing to have a hearing loss.

**Project a "can-do" image:** Attitude makes a difference.

**Be specific when asking for help:** Tell people that you don't hear well. Ask for their help because ... "what you say is important to me".

**Pick your best spot:** Good lighting, quiet rooms, closeness to the speaker make a big difference.

**Anticipate:** Planning ahead enhances the value of context.

**Eliminate distractions:** Turn off the TV and stereo.

**Pay attention:** Concentrate on the speaker.

**Take the pressure off:** Telling others of your hearing loss keeps them from being

apprehensive it's their problem.

**Advocate:** Ask for and use assistive technology where it should be available.

**Never Give Up:** It requires a lot of you. Don't accept brush-offs like "never mind".

**Show your appreciation:** Tell them how much you appreciate their patience and help.

**Join SHHH:** It's the way you learn to do the rest of the things.

### For Communicating with People with Hearing Loss

**Get Their Attention:** Tap their shoulder; wave your hand; say their name ... before you start talking.

**Make the Subject Clear:** Establish the subject at the start of the conversation and whenever you change subjects.

**Don't shout:** Raising your voice doesn't usually help ... it's the consonants that most Hard of Hearing people miss; shouting only makes the vowels louder.

**Don't exaggerate your Lip Movements:** It's hard to speechread.

**Use Appropriate Gestures:** Your head motion can clearly indicate "Yes" or "No". Shrugged shoulders indicate uncertainty, a pointing finger calls attention to something.

**Use Appropriate Facial Expressions:** A smile, frown, raised eyebrow, or a furrowed brow all convey meaning.

**Cut Out Background Noises:** Turn off the television or radio. Turn off fans or air conditioners if they are interfering.

**Get Close and Face Them:** Sound doesn't travel well and vision helps a lot.

**Rephrase:** Don't just repeat when someone didn't understand ... rephrase in simpler words.

**Ask for Confirmation:** If what you said is important, ask for confirmation ... not just a nod, but enough of a playback to assure that your message was understood.

**Don't Give Up:** Hard of Hearing people really want to hear what you have to say. They will appreciate your perseverance.

## Resource Summary

### North Carolina Agencies and Services

DSDHH: <http://dsdhh.dhhs.state.nc.us/>

Regional Resource Centers (See DSDHH)

Vocational Rehabilitation:

[www.dhhs.state.nc.us/docs/divinfo/dvr.htm](http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/docs/divinfo/dvr.htm)

Relay NC: [www.relaync.com/](http://www.relaync.com/)

IP Relay: MCI: [www.ip-relay.com/](http://www.ip-relay.com/)

Equipment Distribution

[dsdhh.dhhs.state.nc.us/division/tanc/tepd.html](http://dsdhh.dhhs.state.nc.us/division/tanc/tepd.html)

Assistive Technology Demonstration (See DSDHH)

Beginnings: [www.beginningssvcs.com/](http://www.beginningssvcs.com/)

NCATP: [www.ncatp.org/](http://www.ncatp.org/)

Arts Access: [www.artsaccessinc.org/](http://www.artsaccessinc.org/)

Vocational Rehabilitation:

[www.dhhs.state.nc.us/docs/divinfo/dvr.htm](http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/docs/divinfo/dvr.htm)

### Web Pages Related to Hearing Loss

SHHH National: [www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org)

NCSHHH: [www.ncheatingloss.org](http://www.ncheatingloss.org)

Beyond-Hearing Web Support Pages:

[www.geocities.com/nc-shhh/bhframe.htm](http://www.geocities.com/nc-shhh/bhframe.htm)

A very good consumer focused page:

[www.healthyhearing.com](http://www.healthyhearing.com)

### Some Listserves/Groups Related to Hearing Loss

Beyond Hearing (Yahoo Beyond-Hearing)

Hearing\_Aids (Yahoo Hearing\_Aids)

Better Hearing News (Yahoo BHNews)

say what club (<http://www.saywhatclub.com/>)

# Introduction to Hearing Loss

## **SHHH (Self Help for Hard of Hearing People)**

SHHH is the largest, most effective organization designed just for people with hearing loss.

You can join SHHH for \$25/year. You'll receive a great magazine about hearing loss, get a discount at the wonderful national convention, you'll meet other people who will help because they've "been there", and you'll be helping SHHH advocate for the needs of all people with hearing loss.

**Join SHHH Today**  
[www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org)

## **NCSHHH**

NCSHHH is the first SHHH State Association in the country. NCSHHH is people from across the state who volunteer to help represent people with hearing loss on state-level boards, commissions, committees etc. NCSHHH also helps the local chapters grow and work together.

## **Wake Chapter**

Wake Chapter has been helping people with hearing loss for about 20 years. We meet most months on the 3rd Thursday of the month at the Cary Senior Center in Bond Park.



Anyone interested in hearing loss is encouraged to join. There are no dues; we're supported by donations and web advertising.

Some meetings have formal programs; others are just for sharing information. A couple meetings a year are outings or pot-luck socials.

For more information, see our web site or call Janet at 469-0924 or email Steve at

[steve.barber@earthlink.net](mailto:steve.barber@earthlink.net).

**Visit the NCSHHH**  
*Award Winning web site*  
[www.ncheatingloss.org](http://www.ncheatingloss.org)

## **Just for You**

### **You Are Not Alone.**

Nearly one in 10 people in the United States has some level of hearing loss. That's over 25 million people.

People of all ages (even newborn babies) can be affected by hearing loss, but by age 65, nearly one in three people have a hearing loss.

Even if you don't have a hearing loss, yourself, you probably have a family member or friend who has trouble hearing.

### **There's Plenty of Help.**

With the help of your family ... and friends .... and SHHH ... and the latest technology ... and all the other resources (see the other side of this sheet), you can make a real difference in your life.

### **But, It's Up to YOU!**

Others, like your doctor, your audiologist, friends, family and SHHH can help you, but only YOU can make the decision to make the most of your hearing. You owe it to yourself ... and to others ... to hear as well as you possibly can.

### **What You Have to Do**

**Start with yourself** ... You've got a hearing loss; get over it. Learn to deal with it; it's you; but don't let it ruin your life. Denial, shame and avoidance are your enemy.

**Get a full audiology workup** ... not just a hearing screening. There's more to it than just pure tone testing.

**See a doctor** ... an EAR doctor, not a regular doctor.

**Learn from people** who've been through it (see SHHH).

**Shop around for an audiologist or hearing aid dealer** who will LISTEN to your needs and work to solve them.

**Shop for hearing aids that will help you the most.**

Learn about all the features and determine which ones are valuable to you. The ONLY goal is hearing better. Vanity is NOT important. In the long run, NOBODY CARES whether you have a hearing aid. If anybody even notices it's probably a positive, instead of a negative.

**Keep learning.** Look into Assistive Listening options that might help you solve special problems. Learn the best way to handle various situations.